

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 L-03 NSC-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00

INR-11 NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-03

AID-20 EB-11 AGR-20 COME-00 TRSE-00 CIEP-03 OMB-01

SWF-02 FRB-03 CEA-02 DRC-01 /136 W

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R 221409Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0000

INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY QUITO

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO

UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 3540

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, HO

SUBJ: REMARKS OF CHIEF OF STATE LOPEZ

1. CHIEF OF STATE LOPEZ MADE SOME INFORMAL REMARKS TO THE PRESS ON THE EVENING OF AUGUST 19. HE WAS ATTENDING THE INAUGURATION OF THE NEW LEADERSHIP OF THE HONDURAN PRIVATE ENTERPRISE COUNCIL (COHEP). THE AUGUST 21 PRESS CARRIED THEIR VERSION OF HIS REMARKS.

2. CONCERNING BANANAS, CHIEF OF STATE SAID THAT TAX CONTINUES TO BE PAID NORMALLY IN HONDURAS BUT EVEN SO THE DOOR IS NOT CLOSED TO DIALOGUE WITH BANANA COMPANIES. THE DISCUSSIONS UNTIL NOW HAVE BEEN IN SEARCH OF A SHORT-TERM SOLUTION. HONDURAS, HE STATED, WILL DETERMINE THE MOST CONVENIENT CONDITIONS FOR MULTI-NATIONAL COMPANIES OPERATIONS. CONCERNING RUMORS

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THAT THE 50 CENT TAX WOULD BE REDUCED, HE STATED DISCUSSIONS

WITH THE COMPANIES ARE CONTINUING. "WE ARE IN LEAGUE WITH THE OTHER CENTRAL AMERICANS AND BANANA PRODUCING COUNTRIES TO CREATE A UNION OF BANANA EXPORTING COUNTRIES WHICH SHOULD BE BENEFIT TO THESE COUNTRIES." HE STATED THAT HONDURAS IS EXERCISING ITS SOVEREIGN RIGHTS IN COLLECTING THE TAX BUT THAT IT IS NOT PLAYING GAMES OR TRYING TO TOSS OUT THE BANANA COMPANIES WHICH ARE SO IMPORTANT IN PROVIDING WORK FOR THOUSANDS OF HONDURANS.

3. HE REMARKED THAT RECENT INITIATIVES IN THE HONDURAS-EL SALVADOR QUESTION HAD BEEN ENCOURAGING. HE EXPRESSED HIS HOPE THAT THE HONDURAN PEOPLE COULD BE FULLY INFORMED ABOUT THE RESULTS OF THE INITIATIVES IN THE NEAR FUTURE. HE ALSO SAID HE HOPED THAT THE TWO COUNTRIES WILL BE ABLE TO RESOLVE THE MATTER SATISFACTORILLY.

4. WITH RESPECT TO CUBA, HE STATED THAT IT APPEARED THE MAJORITY OF OAS MEMBER STATES ARE CHANGING THEIR POSITION IN REGARD TO ITS GOVERNMENT. HE POINTED OUT THAT HONDURAS WOULD ABIDE BY THE DECISION OF THE OAS IF THE ORGANIZATION DECIDES THAT THE ORIGINAL REASONS FOR CUBA'S EXCLUSION FROM THE INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM ARE NO LONGER VALID.

SANCHEZ

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NNN

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